

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: SENV, BE

SUBJECT: POLLUTION REPORT TO CONGRESS

REF: A) A-9465 B) STATE 26683 C) BRUSSELS 1125

1. AFTER CONSULTING WITH RESPONSIBLE OFFICIALS MINISTRY OF HEALTH, EMBASSY SUGGESTS BELGIAN PROFILE BE CHANGED AS FOLLOWS:

PART I. PARA 2 : DELETE LAST SENTENCE AND REPLACE BY "TODAY THERE ARE 76 USED WATER PURIFICATION PLANTS IN BELGIUM TAKING CARE OF POLLUTED WATERS DISCHARGED BY 1,365,700 PEOPLE, OR ABOUT 14 PER CENT OF BELGIUM'S POPULATION. TWENTY ADDITIONAL USED WATER PURIFICATION PLANTS ARE PRESENTLY UNDER CONSTRUCTION FOR ANOTHER 8 PER CENT OF THE POPULATION." PARA 3: 40 PERCENT IN PLACE OF 25-35 (AUTO EMISSIONS ESTIMATED TO ACCOUNT FOR HALF THIS). ADD "INDUSTRY'S SHARE OF TOTAL AIR POLLUTION ESTIMATED AT 27 PERCENT".

PART II. THREE REGIONAL WATER PURIFICATION AUTHORITIES TO BE ESTABLISHED BY LAW OF MARCH 26, 1971 (PUBLISHED MAY, 1, 1971) NOT YET FUNCTIONING. THE 1971 LAW HAS SINCE BEEN SUPPLEMENTED BY A NUMBER OF ROYAL DECREES AND IMPLEMENTING LAWS. A DECREE TO IMPLEMENT OTHER LAW OF MARCH 26, 1971 ON GROUNDWATER IS PRESENTLY UNDER STUDY TO ESTABLISH SPECIFIC REGULATIONS FOR DIFFERENT

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INDUSTRIAL SECTORS. MINISTRY AGRICULTURE ISSUED LAW FOR CONSER-

VATION OF NATURE ON JULY 12, 1973 (PUBLISHED SEPT. 11, 1973).

PARA 1 (PG2): DELETE "FIVE". REPLACE PARA 2 BY "IN 1974, A SECRETARY OF ENVIRONMENT, ATTACHED TO THE PRIME MINISTER, WAS ASSIGNED TO COORDINATE THE ACTIVITIES OF THE WORKING GROUPS."

PARA III. (1). PARA 1: CHANGE "ENACTED" TO "PUBLISHED".

CHANGE FOURTH SENTENCE TO READ "AUTHORIZES THE REGIONAL AGENCIES (WHICH HAVE NOT YET BEEN PUT INTO OPERATION) TO TAKE OVER.. ETC".

DELETE LAST PARAGRAPH.

PART III (2). PARA 1: DECREE OF JULY 26, 1971 FURTHER

MODIFIED BY DECREES OF JULY 3, 1972 AND JAN. 29, 1974. REPLACE

FOURTH SENTENCE BY "THIS LAW REQUIRES THAT AFTER AUGUST 5, 1973 ALL FUEL OILS USED IN THESE PROTECTION ZONES FOR DOMESTIC HEATING CONTAIN NO MORE THAN 1.0 PERCENT OF SULPHUR. ON FEBRUARY 12, 1974, A

MINISTERIAL DECREE ISSUED REQUIRING AN ANNUAL INSPECTION AND CLEANING OF DOMESTIC HEATING INSTALLATIONS FOR ALL BUILDINGS LOCATED IN THE PROTECTION ZONES. THIS PROVISION HAS NO

BEEN EXTENDED TO COVER ALL DOMESTIC HEATING INSTALLATIONS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. A DECREE IS BEING PREPARED TO ESTABLISH STANDARDS FOR SO₂ AND DUST EMISSION CAUSED BY INDUSTRIAL PROCESSES IN SPECIFIC INDUSTRIES, SUCH AS REFINERIES AND ELECTRIC POWER

STATIONS." REPLACE LAST PARA WITH NEW PARAS 3 AND 4: "NATIONAL OR REGIONAL AIR QUALITY REGULATIONS HAVE NOT YET BEEN ISSUED TO DATE. A WORKING GROUP IS ELABORATING STANDARDS FOR ALL

KINDS OF POLLUTANTS, BUT NOT BY SPECIFIC INDUSTRY. THESE ARE EXPECTED TO BE PUBLISHED THIS YEAR." AS FOR EMISSION STANDARDS, APPLICATIONS BY NEW BUSINESSES FOR AN OPERATING PERMIT IN BELGIUM ARE CURRENTLY EXAMINED BY A COMMISSION FOR INDUSTRIAL ECOLOGY, COMPOSED OF OFFICIALS OF APPROPRIATE GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE INDUSTRY SECTOR, AND UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS.

IN GRANTING THE OPERATING PERMIT, THE MOST SEVERE STANDARDS EXISTING ABROAD ARE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT, WITH DECISIONS ON POLLUTION LIMITS MADE ON AD HOC, CASE-BY-CASE BASIS. THE SAME WORKING GROUP WILL DETERMINE THE HEIGHT OF CHIMNEYS ACCORDING TO PERCENTAGE OF SO₂ EMISSIONS. A PROGRAM IS ALSO PLANNED TO REDUCE GRADUALLY THE SULPHUR CONTENT IN FUEL OIL OVER THE NEXT SEVERAL YEARS."

PART IV. PARA 1: INSERT NEW SECOND SENTENCE "IN 1974, THE BUDGET AMOUNTED TO OVER \$50 MILLION."

PART V. SUGGEST MENTION OF GOB SUBSIDY PROGRAM AS DESCRIBED PG. 5 OF MARKER STUDY (REF B) AND BRUSSELS 153.

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PART VI. REPLACE BY: "ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS IN BELGIUM SHOULD GRADUALLY IMPROVE OVER THE NEXT FIVE TO TEN YEARS. NEW INDUSTRIES WILL PROBABLY HAVE TO MEET INCREASINGLY STRINGENT POLLUTION STANDARDS IN ORDER TO OPERATE. THE ENERGY CRISIS WILL ENCOURAGE GREATER USE OF NATURAL GAS FOR HEATING AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS. GOVERNMENT COORDINATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF ITS VARIOUS POLLUTION CONTROL PROGRAMS SHOULD ALSO IMPROVE, PARTICULARLY WHEN THE PROPOSED REGIONAL WATER

AUTHORITIES BEGIN TO FUNCTION. IN SUM, THE GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE INDUSTRY ARE DEALING SERIOUSLY WITH RATHER FORMIDABLE POLLUTION PROBLEMS, AND THIS EFFORT IS LIKELY TO INTENSIFY IN THE FUTURE".

2. CONCERNING QUESTION POSED REF (B):

A. ROYAL ACT ON POLLUTION CONTROL AND IMPLEMENTING DECREES CANNOT BE EASILY SUMMARIZED, PARTICULARLY BY THE NON-EXPERT. WE ARE FURNISHING FULL TEXTS.

B. REQUIREMENTS LEVIED ON COCKERILL WERE RESULT OF DECISION BY NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR INDUSTRIAL ECOLOGY (SEE ABOVE). NATURE OF DELIBERATIONS CONFIDENTIAL, BUT STANDARDS APPARENTLY BASED ON THOSE USED IN U.S. AND OTHER MAJOR INDUSTRIAL COUNTRIES.

C. INDUSTRY DATA IS AS FOLLOWS:

(1) PRIMARY IRON/STEEL PRODUCTION (1000 MT)

	PIG IRON	STEEL
1973	12,660	15,528
1978 (ESTIMATE)	15,500	19,000

TOTAL CAPITAL INVESTMENT IN 1973: 8.25 BILLION BF. IN 1978: PROBABLY CLOSER TO 12 BILLION BF. NO ESTIMATE AVAILABLE REGARDING PERCENT ASSIGNED TO POLLUTION CONTROL. IRON AND STEEL COMMUNITY IS PREPARING EXTENSIVE STUDY ON THE SUBJECT WHICH WILL NOT BE READY BEFORE MAY 1975.

(2) PRIMARY NON-FERROUS METALS PRODUCTION (1000MT)

	COPPER	OTHER	TOTAL
1973	378,000	457,884	835,884
1978 (ESTIMATE)	420,000	560,000	980,000

INVESTMENT IN 1973: BF 1.98 BILLION. NO ESTIMATE AVAILABLE FOR 1978, BUT MAY WELL BE LESS. NO ESTIMATES AVAILABLE RE PERCENT ASSIGNED TO POLLUTION CONTROL.
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